

## Kennebunkport Fire Department

### SOG 1

#### INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

JAN 1992  
SEPT 1999

#### **PURPOSE:**

1. To provide a centralized command for incident command.
2. To provide for internal/external agency command coordination.
3. To prevent overloading an individual with more information than he/she can effectively correlate
4. To provide common, plain language terminology in radio communications, unit identification, command staff positions, fire ground orders, incident scene orientation, etc.

#### **AFFECTED PERSONNEL:**

All personnel involved in any phase of fire fighting or other emergencies.

#### 1. ESTABLISHING COMMAND

The first arriving unit will be the INCIDENT COMMANDER. When the IC assigns crews, they report to COMMAND. All sector communication goes to COMMAND

#### 2. INITIAL REPORT

The first unit arriving at the scene of an incident will give a brief radio report. This report describes the situation to the radio dispatcher and advises that COMMAND is set up.

NOTE: All personnel will call the dispatchers "FIRE ALARM".

This initial report will include the following:

- A. The unit identification, on scene, and FORMAL assumption of command. (eg.) "Engine 1, on scene, assuming command."
- B. The building description, including such items as: the occupancy, size, and type of construction, if pertinent.
- C. Any obvious smoke or fire conditions and the location of same, if appropriate.
- D. Any obvious life hazards

The fire alarm dispatcher will repeat this information. Individual unit acknowledgment is not necessary.

All units should maintain radio silence while responding to an incident. The person initially in command will give a clear on-scene report and continue to give updated progress reports as needed.

NOTE: COMMAND is not automatically transferred when a higher ranking officer arrives on the fire ground. The transfer of command takes place as shown under Transfer of Command below. The Chief Officer, of a protection zone, can allow a lower ranking Officer to keep COMMAND. This does not negate their responsibility for the incident. Officers are only responsible for incidents within their respective protection zones. The person(s) delegated by the Forestry Service, is responsible for grass, brush and forest fires, in all protection zones.

### 3. INITIAL COMMAND

When command is set up by a unit, instead of the first due engine, that firefighter must decide the proper commitment for that engine. The commitment will fall into one of three general modes listed below.

A. NOTHING SHOWING MODE - These situations require investigation by the first due engine company. The other responding companies will stage as shown under Level 1 Staging, explained later in this manual.

B. FAST ATTACK MODE - An interior fire in a residence, apartment, or small commercial occupancy, requires immediate action to stabilize. These types of situations require the officer to decide quickly how to commit the first due engine. When a fast interior attack is proper, using the portable radio is permissible. This mode should not last more than a few moments. It will end with one of the following:

1. A stabilized situation.
2. Command is passed to the next arriving or higher ranking officer
3. An unstable situation. The officer must withdraw to the exterior and set up a command position.

C. COMMAND MODE - The COMMAND MODE is a strong and direct command. The following factors determine when to use the COMMAND MODE from the onset:

1. Consider the size of the fire.
2. Consider the potential for occupancy.
3. Consider the complexity of the occupancy.
4. Consider the chance of extension.

The fire fighter will set up a command position and maintain that position until formally relieved by a ranking officer. In all cases the initiative and judgment of the unit setting up command is very important. These modes are not strict rules, but are general guidelines to help the fire fighter, setting up command, plan their actions.

### 4. TRANSFER OF COMMAND

The following procedures will govern the transfer of COMMAND:

A. Transfer COMMAND Face-to-face. When face-to-face is not possible transfers via radio are acceptable. FIRE ALARM will verify all transfers of COMMAND via radio.

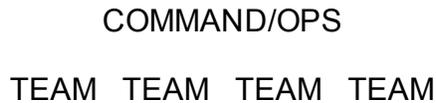
B. The first arriving Chief Officer may relieve the initial Incident Commander of the command functions. The initial IC may then assume the OPERATIONS functions unless directed otherwise.

C. The person being relieved will brief the officer assuming COMMAND of the following:

1. The general situation status including the fire location, extent, conditions, extension, and the effectiveness of control efforts.
2. The deployment and assignments of committed apparatus.
3. The appraisal of needs for additional resources.

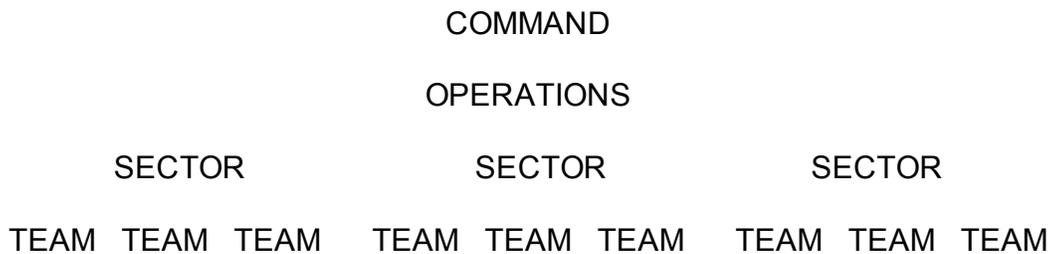
### 5. COMMAND STRUCTURE

The basic structure for a routine incident, using a few companies, involves two levels. The role of COMMAND/OPS combines the Strategic and Tactical levels. Apparatus report directly to COMMAND/OPS and operate at the Task level.



In complex situations COMMAND operates at the Strategic level .COMMAND determines the strategy to deal with the incident. COMMAND should assign an OPERATIONS officer (OPS) to direct and coordinate (control) the incident. OPERATIONS will set up SECTOR officers. The Sector officers operate at the Tactic level, directing the work of several companies or TEAMS. The TEAMS perform the specific tasks as directed by SECTORS officers. The ideal structure of a complex incident should include these four (4) levels:

- Strategy Level - COMMAND
- Control Level - OPERATIONS (OPS)
- Tactical Level - SECTOR OFFICERS
- Task Level - TEAMS or COMPANIES



## 6. STAGING

Staging procedures provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, personnel and equipment, before assignment at incidents. Effective use of these procedures will:

1. Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.
2. Allow time for COMMAND to check conditions before assigning companies.
3. Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to aid more effective assignment by COMMAND.
4. Produce effective communications by reducing radio traffic during the critical, initial stages of fire operations.
5. Allow COMMAND to formulate and carry out a plan without confusion and pressure.

Staging involves two (2) levels: LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2.

1. Level 1 Staging is automatically in effect for all responses, unless otherwise ordered by COMMAND (of officer rank).
2. Level 2 Staging replaces Level 1 staging, when ordered by COMMAND (of officer rank).

### LEVEL 1 STAGING:

1. The first arriving apparatus will respond directly to the scene. If it is the first unit on scene it will give a size-up report and set up COMMAND.
2. All other units will stage in their direction of travel, uncommitted. Uncommitted apparatus will stage at a position, providing maximum tactical options for use, direction of travel, water supply,

etc.

3. Staged apparatus will report their status. (ie) "Engine 1 staged at hydrant, corner of Spring and Cross." Radio acknowledgment of this should be from COMMAND. If COMMAND has forgotten that the apparatus is in a staged position, the driver shall contact COMMAND and re-advise him.
4. A Pre-plan will be the only exception to LEVEL 1 staging unless otherwise ordered by COMMAND (of officer rank).

LEVEL 2 STAGING: Use level 2 staging when you need a reserve of apparatus, companies or teams. COMMAND places these companies in a Staging Area.

1. COMMAND may appoint a Staging Area and Staging Officer. The activities in the Staging area are the responsibility of the Staging Officer. The first arriving Officer will be the Staging Officer, if COMMAND does not appoint one. He will identify himself to COMMAND on arrival.

2. COMMAND may ask the Staging Officer to select a location for the Staging Area. When selecting a staging area location consider the following needs.

A. A large open area with enough space for parking that allows easy entrance and exit of equipment.

B. Enough distance from the incident location to prohibit fire fighters walking in and out of the incident scene unaccounted for.

C. Bathroom facilities and appropriate rest and relief area available, if necessary.

D. The area will not be in the path of smoke or other toxic effects from the incident scene.

3. All communication will be between STAGING and COMMAND. All responding apparatus, or units, will maintain radio silence. All apparatus and units will report in person (face-to-face) to the Staging Officer. Fire fighters will stand by their apparatus as TEAMS with emergency lights turned OFF. The Staging Officer's unit or apparatus will leave emergency lights on. This will make it easier to locate him.

4. When directed by COMMAND, the Staging Officer will verbally assign Teams and apparatus to report to specific areas. The staging Officer will tell them where and who to report to. The Staging Officer will then advise COMMAND of the specific unit(s) assigned.

5. The Staging Officer will give COMMAND periodic reports of available companies in the staging area. COMMAND will use this information to request additional resources.

6. The Staging Officer may also be responsible for the following functions:

A. Coordinate with the Police Department to block streets, intersections and other access required for the staging area.

B. Progress reports to COMMAND indicating number and type of units available.

C. Take a position that is visible and accessible to incoming and staged companies. This will be done by leaving the red lights operating on his unit.

D. The Staging Officer may have to give the direction of response and routing for responding companies to get into the staging area.

Any Officer who wants STATION COVERAGE should contact COMMAND face-to-face and request it. This should never be done at a critical time.

## 7. SECTORING

SECTORING describes a standard system of dividing fire ground command into small command units or areas.

NOTE - This will be the standard system for the KENNEBUNKPORT FIRE SERVICE for appointing areas on the fire ground.

## EXTERIOR SECTORS/EXPOSURES

The front of the structure is SIDE (1). Usually, it is the main entrance of the building. It is usually the address of the building also. If the building has no address side, COMMAND states which side of the building is Side (1). All other locations are in relation to Side (1). SIDE (2) is the side immediately to the left of Side (1), when facing Side (1). SIDE (3) is the side directly opposite Side (1). SIDE (4) is the side immediately to the right of Side (1) when facing Side (1).

The exposures facing numbered sides have the exposures of the same number. (ie) exposure #1 faces side #1, exposure #3 faces side #3 etc.

## INTERIOR SECTORS/EXPOSURES

Divide the interior of a building into 4 sectors. Label these sectors (A), (B), (C) and (D). Facing the fire floor from side #1, Sector (A) is at the immediate left and (B), (C) and (D) proceed clockwise. Therefore Sector (A) is the left front, Sector (B) the left rear, Sector (C) the right rear and Sector (D) the right front.

REMEMBER - The exterior sides and exposures are numbered. The interior sectors and exposures are lettered. This should prevent mixing the two and lessen confusion.

WORKING SECTORS - (meaning areas or teams that have SECTOR commanders assigned). The following guidelines control SECTORS.

It is the responsibility of OPERATIONS to assign SECTORS, for effective fire ground control.

There are two types of SECTORS. AREA SECTORS for fire fighting control, and FUNCTION SECTORS for task(s) assignments.

OPERATIONS must advise each SECTOR COMMANDER of the overall strategy and specific goal of the sector.

Numbers or letters indicate Sectors. For example, an exterior, left side sector would be "sector (2)" and an interior, left front sector would be "sector (A)."

Landmarks may provide better designations for operating sectors. (ie) "roof sector" or "interior sector."

Multistory occupancy sectors are referred to by floor numbers. (ie) Interior Sector 5 (A) would mean the fifth floor, left front.

The task that a Function Sectors is doing, will identify it. (ie) "salvage sector," "ventilation sector" or "search and rescue sector."

SECTOR COMMANDERS will control working sectors. Sector Commanders can be Chief Officers, Company Officers or any other fire fighter, appointed by OPERATIONS.

Sector Commanders will use the SECTOR DESIGNATIONS in radio communications.

Sector Commanders are responsible for all assigned functions within their sector. Each Sector Commander will:

- a. Monitor task progress.
- b. Redirect activities as needed.
- c. Coordinate with other activities in the fire operation.

- d. Monitor the safety of sector personnel.
- e. Request additional resources as needed.
- f. Communicate with operations.
- g. Control resources within their sector(s).

The Sector Commanders supervise and monitor operations within their sector. This will require the Sector Commander to wear appropriate protective clothing and equipment for the area of operation.

Each Sector Commander will keep OPERATIONS informed of conditions in their sector through regular progress reports. Sector Commanders will advise OPERATIONS of significant changes. They will report the completion or inability to complete a task to OPERATIONS immediately. They will report hazardous conditions, accidents or collapse etc. to OPERATIONS immediately.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

COMMAND refers to those functions necessary for control and accomplishment of strategic goals. At a complex incident, the COMMAND level will be the highest ranking officers. They will plan the strategy. They will develop an adequate and effective command structure. They will organize the fire ground and provide the support to meet these goals

DEFENSIVE MODE is one where command's appraisal of the situation is that the building is going to be a total loss and that a primary search will be for bodies only, thus primary search will be conducted along with the secondary search and that fire fighting operations will initially be conducted from outside of the structure.

OFFENSIVE MODE is one where command's appraisal of the situation is that an inside attack will be conducted along with a primary search.

OPERATIONS refers to those organizational elements that are at the Control Level. OPERATIONS will control several TEAMS or companies. OPERATIONS reports to COMMAND.

SECTORS are identified as the Tactical Level of Command in the organizational structure.

TEAMS (or companies) This is the Task Level in the organizational structure. This refers to those evolution-oriented functions, or company level operations, and individual accomplishments, which add up to the achievement of the SECTORS goal.

NOTE: COMMAND assignments of OPS, OPS to SECTOR, SECTOR to TEAM or COMMAND/OPS to TEAM, are of a specific goal. The level receiving the assignment determines the evolution necessary to complete the task